

letter from the Board of Regents stating that this \$1.4 million would be best spent in providing an education at Curtis in lieu of, say, an increase in the faculty salaries or a new program at the University of Nebraska Lincoln, I feel that it's my obligation to follow the lead of the Board of Regents that establish how the university system should work. And, since Curtis will become a part of the university and since the Board of Regents have chose not to state to the Legislature that they want the Curtis school back, I will not be supporting this motion to pull the bill from the Appropriations Committee and I will not be supporting the bill even if it is pulled. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Barrett, please, then Senator Wesely.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. President, and members, I am very pleased to be able to co-sponsor the request with Senator Elmer to place LB 1042 on General File despite the action which was taken by the Appropriations Committee. I am very much in support of this motion and I guess I would like to talk for just a moment or two about quality. I think LB 1042 is a good bill because the School of Technical Agriculture over at Curtis is a good school. In this day and age, agriculture and other businesses in Nebraska are in competition, of course, with other states and with other nations around this world and to compete successfully we have got to have quality. We need quality employees. That's what we have already got over at Curtis. Why give that up? The SRI survey of 198 agribusiness employers told us very emphatically that they recommended keeping Curtis open. I believe that percentage was something like 80 percent. And their reasons, and I'm paraphrasing, number one, Curtis fulfills the need for agriculture technical education. Number two, Curtis is a good program that produces good graduates. And, number three, during the past five years, 38 percent of the respondents hired one or more Curtis graduates and they rated those Curtis grads hired on a 3.4 to a 4.0 scale, meaning good to excellent. Curtis is producing excellence. It's producing quality graduates. These graduates are staying in Nebraska. Committee testimony indicated that about 94 percent of those graduates from that school are staying in Nebraska. It's a state school which graduates students that employers find good to excellent and it's an investment by the state, resulting in graduates that remain in the State of Nebraska to work. In addition, I noted that committee testimony stressed that this